

SENATE RESOLUTION
8701

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Jacobsen, Benton, McAuliffe, Carlson, Johnson, B. Sheldon, Regala, Fraser, Rasmussen, Roach, Pflug, Spanel, Murray and Haugen

WHEREAS, Participation in athletics is one of the most effective ways for students in the United States to develop leadership skills, self-discipline, initiative, and confidence; and

WHEREAS, Sport and fitness activity contributes to emotional and physical well-being, and both males and females can benefit from both strong minds and strong bodies; and

WHEREAS, The communication, competition, and cooperation skills learned through athletic experience play a key role in the contributions of athletes to the home, workplace, and society; and

WHEREAS, Early motor skill training and enjoyable experiences of physical activity strongly influence lifelong habits of physical fitness; and

WHEREAS, Individuals who participate in sports have higher levels of self-esteem, less depression, and a reduced risk for disease and other illness; and

WHEREAS, Girls and women historically have had fewer opportunities to participate in school and professional athletics but have made major gains in participation in recent decades; and

WHEREAS, The state of Washington honors the struggle, perseverance, and strength of women who have paved the way for Washington's female athletes; and

WHEREAS, Female student-athletes graduate from high school at a significantly higher rate than female students in general (68 percent and 59 percent, respectively), and teenage female athletes are less than half as likely to become pregnant as female nonathletes (5 percent and 11 percent, respectively); and

WHEREAS, Title IX, the federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in schools and colleges receiving federal funds, has aided in increasing the national average number of collegiate women's sports teams per school from 2.2 in 1971 to an all time high of 8.3, and has aided in increasing the total number of female high school athletes from less than 200,000 in 1971 to almost 3 million today; and

WHEREAS, 67,884 female athletes participate in high school sports in Washington, constituting 44 percent of the total number of athletes as compared to the national average of women participating in sports in high school of 41 percent; and

WHEREAS, High school athletic teams in the state of Washington have achieved many accomplishments that serve as an inspiration to young women to promote the values of teamwork and cooperation. Examples of successful high school athletes and teams include: Chelsea Hunt, soccer player at Jefferson High School in Federal Way, and the Seattle Times' High School Athlete of the Year; Mead High School, winner of the girls 2003 WIAA 4A state Volleyball Championship; Snohomish High School, winner of the girls 2003 WIAA state 4A Cross Country Championship; and Richland High School, winner of the girls 2003 state 4A Soccer Championship; and

WHEREAS, Washington colleges and universities have fostered outstanding achievements in women's athletics, including: The University of Washington's women crew team, the winner of three NCAA Division I Championships; Seattle Pacific University's women gymnastics team, winner of one NCAA Division II Championship; the naming of Paige Benjamin as Washington's NCAA Woman of the Year for her accomplishments on the UW volleyball team; the recipients of NCAA postgraduate scholarships Laura Widman, for her achievements with the Seattle Pacific University Outdoor Track and Field team, and Ellanie Richardson, for her achievements with the Washington State University Outdoor Track and Field team; and the inspiring scholastic improvements at St. Martin's College in Lacey, which since 1995 experienced a 53 percent increase in the percentage of female student athletes that graduate, the greatest increase in NCAA women's sports; and

WHEREAS, Institutions of higher education continue to produce elite athletes competing with pride, commitment, and passion. The participation of Washington female collegiate athletes

is among the highest in the country at 48 percent of total athletes. The participation rate of female athletes in community colleges in Washington is 46 percent of total athletes. Currently, there are 250 female athletes participating at Central Washington University, 190 female athletes participating at Eastern Washington University, 56 female athletes participating at The Evergreen State College, 205 female athletes participating at Pacific Lutheran University, 146 female athletes participating at Seattle Pacific University, 181 female athletes participating at Gonzaga University, 95 female athletes participating at Seattle University, 56 female athletes participating at St. Martin's College, 194 female athletes participating at the University of Puget Sound, 313 female athletes participating at the University of Washington, 240 female athletes participating at Washington State University, 211 female athletes participating at Western Washington University, 41 female athletes participating at Walla Walla College, 114 female athletes participating at Whitman College, and 160 female athletes participating at Whitworth College; and

WHEREAS, Washington is honored to host the Seattle Storm, a professional women's basketball sports team, whose professional women athletes have proven that women's sports do not end at the collegiate level. Washington is also honored to have Storm Head Coach Anne Donovan, as women across the country are underrepresented in leadership positions of coaches, officials, and sports administrators, and there is a demonstrated need for women to serve in these positions to ensure a fair representation of the abilities of women and to provide role models for young female athletes; and

WHEREAS, Lauren Jackson, power forward for the Seattle Storm, was named the 2003 WNBA Most Valuable Player and the Sports Woman of the Year by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer; and

WHEREAS, The number of funded research projects focusing on the specific needs of female athletes is limited, and the information provided by the projects is imperative to the health and performance of future female athletes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate celebrate Washington Girls and Women in Sports Day on February 4, 2004, and encourage others to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the women's athletic directors of each high school and institution of higher education named in this resolution.

I, Milton H. Doumit, Jr., Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8701,
adopted by the Senate
February 4, 2004

MILTON H. DOUMIT, JR.
Secretary of the Senate